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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICANT(S): Keith L. Milliman, et. al. **EXAMINER:** To Be Assigned

SERIAL NO.: To Be Assigned **GROUP UNIT:** To Be Assigned

FILED: Concurrently Herewith

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO.: PCT/US2003/031638

INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE: 06 October 2003

PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED: 06 October 2002

TITLE: SURGICAL STAPLING DEVICE

Mail Stop Non-Fee Amendments
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Sir/Madam:

Prior to examination, please amend the above-identified application as follows:

Amendments to the Specification begin on page 2 of this paper.

Amendments to the Claims are reflected in the listing of claims which begins on page 3 of this paper.

Remarks/Arguments begin on page 7 of this paper.

CERTIFICATION UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.10

I hereby certify that this correspondence and the documents referred to as enclosed are being deposited with the United States Postal Service on date below in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Non-Fee Amendments, Commissioner for Patents, Mail Stop Patent Application, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Dated: 3/23/2005


Susan S. Rickard